



Innovative Floodplain Management

Full Mitigation Best Practice Story

Lenoir County, North Carolina

Kinston, NC - Approximately 75 percent of the homes in Kinston-Lenoir County's floodplain have experienced repeated flooding following Hurricanes Fran (1996), Dennis (1999), and Floyd (1999). Many of these homes sustained substantial damage. The community was devastated, both physically and economically.



The City of Kinston and Lenoir County made a commitment to proactively reduce flood risks by integrating floodplain management planning into their community development efforts. Using Geographical Information Systems (GIS), local officials developed databases and tracking functions to more effectively coordinate floodplain management and community development. Officials use the GIS tools to predict the impacts of various disaster scenarios, identify vulnerable structures, and track the progress of property acquisitions.

The project also provides useful information to facilitate disaster response and recovery. Through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and State support, more than 1,000 properties in the floodplain have already been acquired by the City and County. There are still plans to purchase approximately 225 more. The residents who were relocated were allowed to move as neighborhoods in order to preserve their social networks, school districts, and overall community spirit.

Ninety-seven percent of the homeowners whose properties have been purchased have elected to stay in Kinston. This effort resulted in a minimal disruption to the community's tax base. In addition, new partnerships have been built. A Green Infrastructure plan has been developed in the floodplain to minimize future damage and improve the quality of life. The Greenway will include historical tourist attractions, educational areas, and recreation facilities.

Activity/Project Location

Geographical Area: **Single County (County-wide)**

FEMA Region: **Region IV**

State: **North Carolina**

County: **Lenoir County**

Key Activity/Project Information

Sector: **Public**

Hazard Type: **Flooding; Hurricane/Tropical Storm**

Activity/Project Type: **Acquisition/Buyouts**

Activity/Project Start Date: **09/2001**

Activity/Project End Date: **Ongoing**

Funding Source: **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)**

Funding Recipient: **Local Government**

Funding Recipient Name: **City of Kinston and Lenoir County**

Activity/Project Economic Analysis

Cost: **\$40,000,000.00 (Estimated)**

Activity/Project Disaster Information

Mitigation Resulted From Federal
Disaster? **Yes**

Federal Disaster #: **1292 , 09/16/1999**

Value Tested By Disaster? **No**

Repetitive Loss Property? **Unknown**

Reference URLs

Reference URL 1: **<http://www.floodsmart.gov/>**

Reference URL 2: **<http://www.ncgov.com>**

Main Points

- The City of Kinston and Lenoir County made a commitment to proactively reduce flood risks by integrating floodplain management planning into their community development efforts.
- Using Geographical Information Systems (GIS), local officials developed databases and tracking functions to more effectively coordinate floodplain management and community development. Officials use the GIS tools to predict the impacts of various disaster scenarios, identify vulnerable structures, and track the progress of property acquisitions.
- The project also provides useful information to facilitate disaster response and recovery.